


Recommendations and Responsibilities



The recommendations presented in this report reflect a desire to strengthen individual student growth; support local programs that encourage recreation and leadership development; encourage collaboration among community resources; recognize the importance of the family as the primary institution for developing and nurturing children; and emphasize the development of healthy, responsible youth through participatory citizenship.

An effective student activities program values the individual's ability to identify and solve problems and provides students with opportunities to develop self-reliance, self-direction, and a sense of responsibility. As defined in this document, student activities include participatory citizenship and service, which are seen as important elements in a comprehensive student activities program. The activities program itself provides a support system for the healthy development of the personal skills of communication and leadership and fosters independence and collaboration.

Recommendations include the following:

- Student activities be included in a student learning plan
- A student activities program be grounded in the needs and interests of students
- Laws and regulations pertaining to student activities be reviewed
- Funding priority for student activities be a part of the overall school plan
- Agencies working with children and youths establish cooperative advisory boards

- There be opportunities for all students to participate in student activities
- Parents be encouraged to participate in the student activities program
- Student activities be designed to extend and connect to students' academic learning

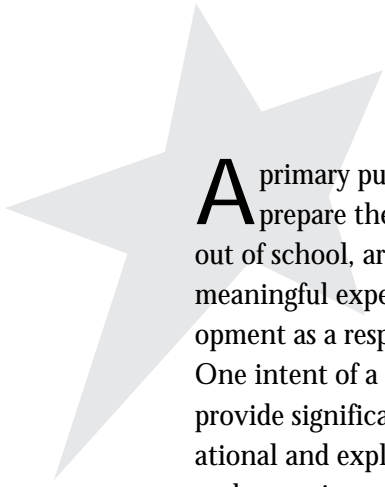
Challenge School Districts' Responsibilities

To implement these recommendations, Challenge school districts will assess their student activities programs by comparing their own programs with the examples in the Challenge guidelines. They will improve and expand their student activities programs based on this assessment. They will also take responsibility for sharing successful practices and pitfalls with others.

California Department of Education's Commitment

The California Department of Education (CDE) is committed to serving as a resource for schools and districts that wish to implement a comprehensive program of student activities that relate closely to student learning, encourage participatory citizenship, and promote the enjoyment of leisure time through recreation. As resources permit, the CDE will search for successful programs across the nation and share those ideas with California schools. The CDE will develop a well-defined set of guidelines for developing student activities programs and will listen to the needs of schools and districts and respond with useful information and resources.

Student Activities for Youth Development



A primary purpose of public education is to socialize youths and prepare them for active citizenship. Student activities, in and out of school, are recognized as an important way of providing meaningful experiences which contribute to each student's development as a responsible citizen and a steward of the environment. One intent of a comprehensive student activities program is to provide significant experiences for every student, including recreational and exploratory experiences. It is not enough to provide such experiences for 80 percent of the student body; all students must have the opportunity to connect to the school and community through participation in a rich program of student activities. The linguistic and cultural gaps must be bridged. The challenge of motivating disconnected, disenchanting students in the population must be faced. By involving students in important ways, soliciting their opinions, including them in the planning, designing with them the activities that will fit their needs, and facilitating a program for all students, schools can and must include everyone.

Students need to make deliberate connections between their curriculum and its application to life experiences through individually selected activities and through service. The motivation for such connections may come from a desire to explore, experiment, expand one's circle of friends, or enjoy leisure time through recreation. Willingness to be accountable for some larger body than oneself—an organization, a program, a school, a community—without seeking to control it leads to choosing stewardship over

self-interest, engenders partnership, and results in personal empowerment (Block, 1993). The accompanying competencies of interaction with peers and adults, teamwork, problem solving, self-reflection, and democratic participation are embedded in this goal.

This document presents a rationale for a broad definition of student activities, outlines the California Department of Education's responsibilities in serving schools and districts, gives examples of successful programs, suggests a set of expectations for districts to use in developing or improving a student activities program, and provides a list of resources for districts to use as they consider strategies for the implementation of the Challenge school district recommendations.

This publication is intended to help Challenge school districts design and implement activities programs which provide powerful learning experiences for students and communicate the rationale for comprehensive student activities programs to their school communities. Following the summary of the Student Activities Questionnaire, this publication addresses the standards and criteria for an effective student activities program, student activities related to the individual student, and student activities related to the school organization and culture. Several examples of student activities programs that provide powerful learning experiences for all students are included. There are many outstanding programs in the schools and communities of California—many more than those recognized in this report.

Summary of Student Activities Questionnaire

An informal survey, the Student Activities Questionnaire, was distributed to Challenge school districts in October, 1995. Six school districts responded to the survey by either telephone or written response. The concerns of schools and districts as reflected in the survey were time, staffing, and funding.

Closed campuses during the school lunchtime did not appear to be a major cause of concern to responding schools, although identifying funds for increased lunchtime supervision, restricting the perimeters of campuses, and creating small-group areas were stated as important issues. One district commented that open hearings have shown that students are generally opposed to a closed campus but adults support the idea. Several respondents said

that students have only 15 to 20 minutes of free time during the lunch break and that intensive student activities might not be necessary or beneficial. Suggestions included setting up many small food kiosks around campus rather than funneling students through a large cafeteria; providing small-group seating areas; and opening computer centers, gymnasiums, and libraries during lunchtime.

All respondents recognized the value of student activities. School respondents recommended developing an overall program that would encourage leadership, pride, a sense of belonging, and participation among all students. The districts suggest that the CDE might help schools and districts improve their student activities programs by facilitating staff development, providing additional funding, helping partnership development, and simplifying regulations.

Concerns about student activities programs included lack of funds to run programs, transportation difficulties, reduced funding for athletics, inadequate funding to pay teachers for extra work, safety concerns about evening activities, and inadequate funding for materials (such as those for photography or science clubs), uniforms, and equipment. The respondents stated that inadequate time for teachers, who are already overextended, to sponsor student activities and the lack of full-time student activities directors are serious barriers to an effective program. One respondent commented, "It can't be done on hope and hard work. It has to be funded."

Two schools emphasized staff development. One of them suggested using the California Association of Directors of Activities (CADA) training program so that activities directors could gain information and develop their skills and abilities. The respondents also expressed an interest in opportunities for activities directors to get together for brainstorming, sharing, or developing new programs. It was suggested that electronic networks serve as one method of facilitating this sharing.

Partnerships with community organizations and agencies and with businesses and corporations were frequently mentioned as a possible solution to the concerns about the need for more people to help. Encouraging outside individuals or groups to volunteer as sponsors for clubs was also mentioned. Several schools requested that the CDE help in this area.

The respondents suggested that the CDE might provide information about ideas and programs that have worked successfully

elsewhere. They asked to receive more information about meeting the challenge of changing student needs and incorporating student activities into school-restructuring programs and challenge school efforts.

Several respondents commented that only those students who choose to be involved gain the benefits of student activities. There is a need for greater efforts to create opportunities for *all* students. One district observed that there is a tendency for students to group themselves by ethnicity into various student activities. In addition, immigrants who do not speak English tend not to be as involved in student activities as those who do.

Examples of Student Activities and Service Programs

The following are some of the many outstanding programs in California schools and communities that sponsor meaningful activities for students:

1. A **Boys and Girls Club** recreational program has been developed in Santa Ana through a partnership between the Boys and Girls Club, a nearby elementary school, and the University of California, Irvine, Department of Education. Education students from the university work in the after-school programs and take extensive research notes for their laboratory class. Activities included in the program are arts and crafts, photography, aerobics, Ballet Folklórico, and opportunities for games and sports teams, literacy development activities, and recreational science programs. The program is offered on school days from 2:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays. Summer hours are also offered. Contact Santa Ana Boys and Girls Club, Reuben Alvarez, Director of Operations, 950 West Highland, Santa Ana, CA 92704, (714) 543-7212.
2. **Brea Junior High School** (Brea-Olinda Unified School District, Orange County) has a diverse student activities program that is student run and student centered and has been recognized as outstanding by the California Association of Directors of Activities. The program sponsors events which entice all members of the student body to be involved. The

activities, which are an extension of the instructional program, recognize, involve, and motivate students. Students are encouraged to participate in activities and meetings. Students are recognized for their excellence in academics, citizenship, service, athletics, and attendance; on their birthdays; and through special programs, such as the BJH Wall of Fame, “Super Star” drawings, and Students of the Month. Staff-appreciation and holiday activities are also strong elements of the program. All new students are welcomed to the school and escorted to classes by a “buddy.” A new-student get-together is also a major part of the school’s service. For more information, contact Dottie Kraus, Activities Advisor, Brea Junior High School, 400 N. Brea Boulevard, Brea, CA 92621-3399 (714) 990-7506.

3. The **California Association of Student Councils (CASC)** is a nonprofit, student-led organization that empowers youths to effect positive change in themselves, their community, their state, and their world. CASC provides student and adviser leadership development that emphasizes ethics, integrity, and collaborative decision making. CASC enhances the quality of education by involving students in activities and programs outside the classroom that build citizenship and encourage self-esteem; provides a channel for student views; and encourages youths to take action in their schools and communities. CASC activities and resources include summer leadership conferences, skill-development sessions for students, opportunities for young people to get involved in the California Legislature and the California State Board of Education, and publications and materials developed for use in classes at both the elementary and secondary levels. For more information, contact June Thompson, Executive Director, California Association of Student Councils, 1212 Preservation Parkway, Oakland, CA 94612, (510) 834-2272.
4. **California YMCA Youth and Government** brings together 1,800 high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors in Sacramento every February to share a hands-on experience in state government. Participants act as assembly members, senators, lobbyists, trial and appellate court justices and attorneys, legislative analysts, and pages. In addition, participants publish a newspaper twice a day and produce a television news program.

Delegates use the actual Senate and Assembly chambers, committee rooms, and the governor's office in the Capitol. They also use the municipal court and supreme court chambers for their court deliberations and take over the entire Hyatt Regency Hotel and convention center during their five-day stay in Sacramento. Students begin preparing for the program in September. At weekly meetings they work on writing legislation, learn debating skills and parliamentary procedure, and familiarize themselves with their roles. A three-day training and elections conference held in Paso Robles, California, in November introduces the participants to the program and provides delegates the chance to develop leadership skills, experience diversity-awareness training, and elect a slate of youth officers who will lead the program. A second three-day conference in January teaches the students about their roles and the process and procedures of state government. When the students arrive in Sacramento in February, they are ready to assume their roles immediately for the five-day conference.

Participants also meet with state constitutional officers, the Governor, chief justice, attorney general, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction during the model legislature and court. The program, which offers an introductory conference in April, is operated by the California YMCA Model Legislature and Court Program in conjunction with local YMCAs that work with high schools in their service areas. Seventy-five YMCAs throughout California currently offer this program. Scholarships are available, and local YMCAs provide extensive fund-raising to help make this experience available to students from all income levels. For more information, contact Pete Perry, Director, California YMCA Youth and Government, 1650 S. Amphlett, San Mateo, CA 94402, (510) 286-4500.

5. The mission of the **Citizenship and Law-Related Education Center** in Sacramento is to "enrich communities by helping youths learn personal and civic responsibility." This mission rekindles the commitment to the value of individual initiative and the spirit of democratic traditions; promotes the necessity of active participation for a productive workplace, sound schools, and safe neighborhoods; and fosters community connections to produce well-informed and educated citizens:

- To facilitate mutually beneficial partnerships between K–12 schools and businesses that prepare youths to succeed in rapidly changing communities and workplaces, the center offers a Principal for a Day program and a Partnership Conference, which bring together schools and businesses that are interested in starting or expanding business-education partnerships.
 - To expand youths’ understanding of the legal and governmental systems and help young people learn responsible decision making and civic participation, the center offers Participating in Local Government, a summer institute designed to increase students’ and teachers’ understanding of local government; the Law-Related Education Conference, featuring Sacramento high school students in mock trial, moot court, and debate competitions; and Youth Forums, which provide the opportunity for young people to share their insights and experiences with influential community members.
 - To develop leadership skills and attitudes that youths need in order to work together to resolve conflicts, create safer schools and neighborhoods, and become community leaders, the center offers Law Works, an interactive community service project for students in seventh to twelfth grade; and Time Out to Resolve It! a school-based conflict-resolution program to teach lifelong decision-making, problem-solving, and communications skills that help students resolve their own conflicts peacefully. For more information contact Citizenship and Law-Related Education Center, 9738 Lincoln Village Drive, Sacramento, CA 95827, (916) 228-2322.
6. The **Clinton Kids Club of the Girls and Boys Club** of Garden Grove maintains an after-school program that focuses on homework and computer literacy. The club provides five study carrels and a number of long tables at which students can do their homework before they participate in the computer learning lab. Up to 70 students can learn mathematics and reading, make reports, and participate in enrichment activities linked to the school curriculum. Students’ skills have improved in comprehension, critical thinking, and decision making. Parental involvement is a strong part of this program; parents volunteer regularly, as do junior and senior

high school students from the community who may have been a part of the program or who have siblings who are in it presently. Located in a large trailer on a school site, this program has become the hub of the community. Parent-education classes are held here, and used clothing is donated, which is distributed through the Learning of the Family program. Contact Clinton Kids Club, Elaine Vito, Branch Director, Clinton Elementary School, 13641 Clinton Street, Garden Grove, CA 92843, (714) 537-8833; or Girls and Boys Club of Garden Grove, Pat Halberstadt, Executive Director, 11421 Garden Grove Boulevard, Garden Grove, CA 92643, (714) 530-0430.

7. The **Constitutional Rights Foundation** in Los Angeles operates two interrelated programs that provide strong student learning experiences:

- **Youth Leadership for Action (YLFA)** was established over 15 years ago and provides high school youths with intensive leadership training interwoven with community service opportunities. Since 1994, the YLFA has consisted of a three-day institute retreat in which participants are trained in team building, project management, communication, and cultural awareness. The YLFA students form a leadership cadre that is responsible for transferring the skills and knowledge that the students have gained to the members of their Youth Task Force LA teams (see below). Participants represent their teams on a citywide youth council for a one-year term. The youth council, convened monthly, coordinates communication among the 20 Youth Task Force LA teams, identifies issues for citywide collaborations, and organizes and implements projects which address these issues. As members of the Youth Council, YLFA participants write and edit other team members' articles for their *Youthful Times* newsletter.
- **Youth Task Force LA: Education, Action, Leadership** challenges young people throughout Los Angeles County to become involved in leadership training and community problem solving. The primary goal of Youth Task Force LA is to help urban youths develop and apply analytical thinking, problem-solving, and other leadership skills by practicing active school and community citizenship. Projects planned by the teams address the following

community issues: youth development and urban education, police and community relations, community and economic development, race relations, and violence reduction. Contact Viki Goto or Tracey Cephers, Constitutional Rights Foundation, 601 South Kingsley Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90005, (213) 487-5590.

8. **Friday Night Live (FNL)**, a peer program designed to prevent alcohol and drug use among teenagers, has programs throughout California that are designed to meet local community needs. At a minimum, the program includes “chapters” that encourage teens to live alcohol- and drug-free lifestyles through its sponsorship of alternative activities, community action projects, assembly presentations, and leadership training. Optional programs developed in California’s counties include parent education, recovering-teen support groups, junior high programs, and teen steering committees. Contact Yuri Penermon, Sacramento County Office of Education, 9738 Lincoln Village Drive, Sacramento, CA 95827-3399, (916) 228-2424.
9. **Girl Scouting in the School Day** makes Girl Scouting accessible to those girls living in lower-income areas, communities where adult volunteer leadership is difficult to obtain and where opportunities for positive extracurricular activities are limited. The program name refers to the fact that these troops meet on school grounds. Girls receive a sash, some supplies, and books to share. Qualified troop leaders are recruited and, when volunteer leaders are unavailable, they are paid for their work. The program enjoys growing success in the San Francisco Bay Area, serving more than 100 schools and more than 2,600 girls. The program From the Heart was established eight years ago as a collaboration between the Girl Scouts of America, schools, and agencies serving pregnant and parenting teens. Informal educational and self-esteem activities are provided for 377 teenage girls in five Bay Area counties. Contact Nancy Berg, Executive Director, San Francisco Bay Girl Scout Council, 7700 Edgewater Drive, Suite 340, Oakland, CA 94621, (510) 562-8470.
10. An example of a highly successful school-age care program is **LA’s BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow)**. It was created in 1988 through an unprecedented partnership of the mayor’s office, the Los Angeles Unified School District,

the city's community redevelopment agency, and the private sector to take an aggressive stand against the growing numbers of young children with no adult supervision when the school day ends. LA's BEST targets the inner-city child who attends schools that have low test scores and are in locations where the lure of the streets is most appealing to a child with few resources and nothing to do after school. The program operates at 22 elementary schools and serves 4,500 children, ages five to twelve, every day after school until 6:00 p.m. at no cost to families. The program focuses on computer instruction, homework assistance and tutoring, organized sports teams, science clubs, the visual and performing arts, field trips, and a variety of enrichment activities. Data from the police department of the Los Angeles Unified School District showed a 40 percent reduction in reported school-based crime incidents in LA's BEST schools in 1993-94 and nearly 60 percent in 1994-95. Contact LA's BEST After-School Enrichment Program, Carla Sanger, Program Director, 200 N. Spring Street, M-1, Los Angeles, CA 90012, (213) 847-3681.

11. **Learning for Life**, a Boy Scout-sponsored program for kindergarten through twelfth-grade students, is designed to support schools in their efforts to prepare students to successfully handle the complexities of today's society and to enhance their self-confidence, motivation, and self-esteem. It is a classroom-based, action-learning process featuring age-appropriate and grade-specific lesson plans to enhance the core curriculum. Learning for Life has become a partner in education, with nearly 6,000 schools nationwide serving more than 784,000 students. Contact Boy Scouts of America, Western Region Office, Tempe, AZ 85280, (602) 752-7000.
12. The **J. H. McGaugh School** (Los Alamitos Unified School District) **Pageant of the Arts** program features a unique study of various art styles and artists and is an integral part of the school curriculum. The program culminates in the reproduction of famous "masterpiece" paintings, in a series of larger-than-life-size tableaux. Each year a new painting is selected for the pageant. This painting represents the schoolwide theme and is reflected throughout the curriculum. The collection provides an ongoing living museum of art heritage. The impact of the Pageant of the Arts on students' self-esteem as well as their depth of knowledge in academic areas

and the visual and performing arts is impressive. Contact John Blaydes, Principal, J. H. McGaugh Elementary School, 1698 Bolsa Avenue, Seal Beach, CA 90740, (310) 431-1389.

13. Other middle school programs include:

- **Altimira Middle School** (Sonoma Valley Unified School District, Sonoma County). The leadership class encourages students to design and implement their own total involvement in student activities. Activities include magazine sales, canned food drives, recreational and noontime activities, dances, nursing home visits, and student recognition programs. Contact Russ Frank, Principal, Altimira Middle School, 17805 Arnold Drive, Sonoma, CA 95476, (707) 935-6020.
- **Cunha Intermediate School** (Cabrillo Unified School District, San Mateo County). Clubs reflect student interests. They include the StarTrek Club, the Simpsons Club, a modern dance club, and many other activities focused on involving *all* students during noninstructional time. A student-run leadership class and a highly active student council design and oversee the daily organized activity. Contact Randy Chapin, Cunha Intermediate School, Kelly and Church Streets, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019, (415) 712-7190.
- **Elsinore Middle School** (Lake Elsinore Unified School District, Riverside County). This academic magnet school concentrates on high-quality, enjoyable activities that will extend student learning. Some activities include the construction of model telescopes and of cars that run, Ballet Folklórico, and language clubs. Contact Cheryl Livengood, Principal, Elsinore Middle School, 1203 W. Graham Avenue, Lake Elsinore, CA 92530, (909) 674-2118.
- **Fair (J. Wilbur) Junior High School** (Franklin-McKinley Elementary School District, Santa Clara County). This program brings together students from a variety of racial and ethnic groups for common activities and goals. Contact Gil Hyder, Principal, Fair (J. Wilbur) Junior High School, 1702 McLaughlin Avenue, San Jose, CA 95122, (408) 283-6400.
- **Hewes Middle School** (Tustin Unified School District, Orange County). At Hewes every student is involved in an

activities program which strengthens the student's connections with the school and expands the student's leadership skills. Contact Regina Caine, Principal, or Diane Aust, Activities Adviser, Hewes Middle School, 13232 Hewes Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92705, (714) 730-7348.

- **Ramona Middle School** (Bonita Unified School District, Los Angeles County). The A.C.T.I.O.N. program connects the staff, students, and community with activities for lifelong enjoyment through teamwork and a common commitment. Contact Karen Schiff, Principal, Ramona Middle School, 3490 Ramona Avenue, La Verne, CA 91750, (909) 394-3181.
- **Rancho Santa Margarita Intermediate School** (Saddleback Valley Unified School District, Orange County). Lunchtime activities are provided for 1,300 students. Contact Walt Gatt, Principal, Rancho Santa Margarita Intermediate School, 21931 Alma Aldea, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688, (714) 459-8252.

14. **Parks and recreation** programs go beyond fun and games. In many communities, the California Parks and Recreation Society sponsors programs for youths. Contact Anne M. Seeley, Director of Education, (916) 446-2777. A partial listing of programs in various California cities follows:

- Programs for "latchkey" children in Pico Rivera
Contact Armando Abrego, (310) 801-4449.
- Juvenile curfew support in Stockton
Contact Pete Waller, (209) 844-8318.
- Family and community revitalization in Los Angeles
Contact Liz Benton, (213) 485-4438.
- Gang prevention and intervention in Vacaville
Contact Frank Luna, (707) 449-5654.
- Resiliency, self-reliance, and self-esteem in San Diego
Contact Jamie Strelow, (619) 673-0530.
- Reduction and prevention of crime and violence in Chino
Contact Cindy Collins, (909) 591-9831.
- Creative skills and cultural pride in San Francisco
Contact Diane Price, (415) 554-9523.
- Academic support in San Jose
Contact Margarita Huertas, (408) 277-4318.
- Career development and job training in Riverside
Contact Judith Bastedo-Griffith, (909) 782-5574.

- Comprehensive community planning for youths in Claremont
Contact Dick Guthrie, (909) 399-5432.
- Graffiti abatement in San Jose
Contact Rudy Martinez, (408) 277-4661.
- Youth mentoring in San Mateo
Contact Paul Council, (415) 377-3340.
- Youth leadership in Daly City
Contact Ed Barney, (415) 991-8006.
- Day care and nutrition for the elderly and the young in Tustin
Contact Gary Magill, (714) 544-8890.
- Substance-abuse prevention in Gardena
Contact Gene Painter, (310) 217-9576.
- Outreach, individual, and family counseling in Rohnert Park
Contact James Park, (707) 585-1122.
- Teen pregnancy in West Sacramento
Contact Steve Palmer, (916) 373-5860.
- Physical and mental rehabilitation in Rancho Los Amigos
Contact Chester Land, (310) 941-7431.

15. **PASOS** (Program for After-School Opportunity and Success) means “steps” in Spanish. Students from Woodland High School assist students in the Beamer Elementary School’s Healthy Start program with homework, computer skills, soccer, puzzles, board games, art activities, aerobics, and Ballet Folklórico. Contact Healthy Start, 525 Beamer, Woodland, CA 95695, (916) 661-0647.

16. **Police Activities League (PAL)** is a crime-prevention program that focuses on education, athletics, and other leisure-time activities to provide at-risk youth with confidence, self-esteem, and interpersonal skills to become responsible members of society. The primary focus for the PAL is to intervene with youths who have limited access to positive recreational programs and who are likely to face boredom, loneliness, and other problems. Typical PAL activities include baseball, basketball, soccer, softball, track, fishing, skiing, camping trips, police explorer and cadet clubs, summer camps, computer training, music, cooking, and cultural education classes. Contact the California Police Activities

League, 305 Washington Street, Oakland, CA 94607, (510) 645-1875.

17. Many children are spending their after-school time in **public libraries**. The presence of latchkey youths is a controversial issue among librarians, but many communities have initiated joint efforts to serve these children effectively. For example, **Grandparents and Books**, initiated at the Los Angeles Public Library, links older adult volunteers with children who come to the library after school. Contact the library at 630 W. 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90022, (213) 228-7000. Another exemplary program, **SPLASH**, Seattle's After-School Happenings, has been funded by the city and implemented at four branches of the Seattle Public Library. "At each site the activities, ranging from making dollhouse furniture and maintaining the library's flower beds to participating in story times, sing-alongs, and homework activities, are tailored to the needs of the particular community served." For a copy of the SPLASH flier, contact Jill Jean, 98104, Seattle Public Library, 1000 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA, (206) 386-4150.
18. **Realizing Intellect Through Self-Empowerment (RISE)** is a newly established program at Menlo-Atherton High School which provides African-American high school students with the mentoring support necessary for academic and personal success. The goals of the RISE program are to achieve a 100 percent graduation rate, improve academic performance, improve scores on standardized tests, and encourage students to attend college. RISE welcomes anyone interested in learning more about the program to contact Josh Edleman or Monica Anderson, Menlo-Atherton High School, Ringwood and Middlefield, Atherton, CA 94025, (415) 923-1291.
19. **School-Age Care (SAC) Programs** are intended to serve as bridges between home and school and are designed to help children grow and have fun. They provide a safe, structured environment that is also homelike and informal. The programs operate in a variety of settings, including school districts, private child care centers, and recreation centers. They are publicly and privately funded. Some of these programs, for children age five to fourteen, receive funds administered by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division. Contact Barbara Metzruk, California

Department of Education, Child Development Division, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 322-6233.

20. **SMART Moves** is a program based on two rigorously tested curricula: Life-Skills Training and Project SMART, a resistance-training/social skills model. The program helps provide young people with the necessary skills to resist alcohol and other drugs and premature sexual activity. Using small-group activities, it teaches young people to recognize and resist media influences and peer pressure and to develop the self-esteem they need to make smart decisions for themselves. Contact David Sykes, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, 1520 Hughes Way, Suite 1C 280, Long Beach, CA 90810, (310) 643-3740.
21. The **Teen Outreach Program (TOP)** began in 1978 with the goals of reducing teen pregnancy and increasing the number of at-risk students who graduate from high school. TOP is based on the principles of positive self-image, critical thinking, concrete life-management skills, and future goals. The program has two components: weekly discussion sessions using the TOP life-skills curriculum and participation in meaningful community service activities. Sessions are facilitated by trained teachers who use experiential activities to foster group discussions. The community service component contributes to the sense of self-worth of TOP teens as they become contributing members of their communities. The service component is coordinated with a local volunteer center or another community-based organization. For further information about the National Teen Outreach Program, contact Lynda Bell, Cornerstone Consulting Group, Inc., P.O. Box 710082, Houston, TX 77271-0082, (215) 572-9463.
22. **Temecula Valley High School's Freshman Foundations Program** includes Greco-Roman Week. This theme week, sponsored by the class leadership council, is the culminating event for the ninth-grade class. It is built around the three major curricular elements of the Freshman Foundations Program: literature, history, and physical education. The judged events include a literary competition (writing assignment), a Greco-Roman history event (examination), coliseum games, a Greco-Roman costume contest, and a toga festival and dance. Contact John Parrott, Principal, Temecula

Valley High School, 31555 Rancho Vista Road, Temecula, CA 92592, (909) 695-7300.

23. **U.C. LINKS** is an after-school program that began at the University of California, San Diego, and now includes the University of California, Santa Barbara. In the future, this program will be offered as a part of a consortium at all the University of California campuses. Located in or on Boys and Girls Clubs, churches, and school district sites, the after-school program for children ages seven to eighteen or nineteen years (if enrolled in school) focuses on computer skills and telecommunications. Instruction is presented in a playful manner to promote literacy outside school and encourage the development of social skills. Multimedia applications, such as desktop publishing of children's writing and links to the Internet are available. Undergraduates who are enrolled in certain human development and education classes are required, as a part of their fieldwork, to work in after-school programs for elementary and middle school students. These particular after-school programs are viewed as laboratories in which the university students learn about human development in a real situation. Each after-school program looks somewhat different, depending on the needs of the community, but each helps students develop literacy skills and learn about computers, the Internet, and access to the World Wide Web—all in an enjoyable, playful, developmentally appropriate way. Contact Michael Cole, Project Director, Professor of Communications and Psychology, University of California, San Diego, 107 Administrative Complex, La Jolla, CA 92093, (619) 534-2989.

24. Students can be "heroes" in their corner of the school. **Vocational Student Organizations** (VSOs), associated with career pathway programs, provide students with an opportunity to be heroes by demonstrating leadership, citizenship, and career skills associated with the curriculum. California VSOs are affiliated with the national organizations and include FFA (agriculture), FBLA and DECA (business), HOSA (health careers), FHA-HERO (home economics), and VICA (industrial and technology education). Contact Deidre Ramson, VICA, (916) 657-2575; Beverly Campbell, HOSA,

(916) 657-2541; Janice DeBenedetti, FHA-HERO, (916) 657-5315; Bob Huevel, FFA, (916) 445-5710; and Bernie Norton, FBLA and DECA, (916) 448-5678.

25. Student activities and service learning can be coordinated.

West High School in Bakersfield has a number of examples. Student leadership focuses on solving campus issues in addition to putting on dances and rallies. The leadership curriculum teaches strategic planning, budgeting, meeting skills, office and phone skills, and ways to involve others in the school community. Leadership students also provide training for other schools. English 9 students apply research and language arts skills by serving as the Associate Student Body (ASB) ad hoc committees with the following goals:

- To create and fill the school time capsule to be buried at the dedication of the new high school
- To sponsor an AIDS-awareness week for campus, including a display of the AIDS quilt, if possible
- To organize the homecoming efforts of the freshman class by researching the class theme (the 1950s) and creating the class skit in which everyone might be involved

The ASB-sponsored mural design competition involved art classes in the design and painting of a spirit mural. (The mural was an ASB solution to graffiti tagging; it worked!) The commercial art class designed posters and programs for school plays and other ASB or cocurricular events. Students in biology classes (botany) planned and carried out campus beautification projects. The projects involved filling long-empty planters in the main quad area of the school. Contact KernServe, Janis Van Dreal, KCSOS 4th Floor, 1300 - 17th Street, City Centre, Bakersfield, CA 93301, (805) 636-4657.

Other Resources and Contacts

Cathy Barankin or Judith Barrett Miller, Sacramento Advocacy (for nonprofit, youth-serving organizations), 400 Capitol Mall, Suite 900, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 447-7341.

J. Peter Cahn, Coordinator of Special Projects, California Association of Directors of Activities (CADA), Lee Junior High School, 520 West Street, Woodland, CA 95695, (916) 662-0251.

Standards and Criteria for Student Activities

If students are to have successful experiences in student activities, parents, teachers, and others must understand what students should know and be able to do as a result of the activities and what elements are necessary for an effective student activities program. Described below are standards for students' participation in activities and criteria for an effective activities program.

What Students Will Know and Be Able to Do as a Result of Participation in Student Activities:

- Students will be able to work successfully in teams.
- Students will value group participation.
- Students will experience a variety of group activities intended to develop skills of communication and leadership.
- Students will understand organizational structure, procedures, and processes, such as governance structures, parliamentary procedures, facilitation skills, group decision-making processes, and conflict resolution.
- Students will experience opportunities for leadership and plan the constructive use of their own time.
- Students will develop an awareness of their own personal strengths as they develop self-direction and a sense of responsibility.

Criteria for an Effective Student Activities Program:

- All activities are anchored in a larger (global) task. There is a purpose beyond the immediate task. The comprehensive student activities program is a part of the school's vision for what students should know and be able to do.
- Students are encouraged to develop the activity, task, or project themselves.
- The activity, task, or project is developmentally appropriate.
- The task, activity, or project and the environment in which it is being accomplished reflect the complexities of life.
- The student (or group of students) has ownership of the process used to undertake the task, project, or activity. The coach or adviser's role is to focus and challenge the student's thinking by asking critical questions so that the student is successful in the task, project, or activity.
- The environment is structured to value and challenge the student's thinking.

- Opinions and processes are tested and adjustments are based on additional information or evidence. Students have access to the skills of meeting planning, dialogue (as opposed to discussion or debate), and collaboration and to electronic linkages to resource information.
- There is opportunity and support for reflection.

Adapted from *Problem-Based Learning*
—Edwin M. Bridges (1992)

The tables which follow describe students' participation in school activities at various levels (Table I) and the characteristics of schoolwide activities programs of varying effectiveness (Table II).

Table I Participation in Student Activities: Minimal–Strong			
Minimal Student Activity Level 1	Limited Student Activity Level 2	Adequate Student Activity Level 3	Strong Student Activity Level 4
<p>Few students are aware of the activities program.</p> <p>Few students participate in activities outside the traditional school day.</p> <p>Students remain silent or unengaged in student activities. They contribute no ideas and do not respond to suggestions that they participate. If they do comment, their thoughts are generally negative or irrelevant.</p>	<p>All students are aware of the student activities program and participate in those activities which are supported by instructional time. They also observe activities or events that are held during the traditional school day and attend after-school events from time to time. They observe the guidelines of good sportsmanship and citizenship but do not necessarily participate actively. Students contribute to an activity, task, or project by expressing their personal opinions. They suggest potentially important issues but do not pursue them in a way that advances the understanding of the group. They work well with at least one other person. They invite contributions from others and solicit friends to join in activities. They tend not to make negative statements.</p>	<p>All students are knowledgeable about the student activities program and participate in activities and events that are offered within the traditional school day. They attend events and contribute to the energy level. They exhibit good sportsmanship and active participation.</p> <p>Students demonstrate knowledge of important ideas related to the activity, task, or project. They participate in and ask critical questions during the planning process. They present more than one viewpoint as the planning progresses. They take a position and are able to support it with evidence or reasons. They use skillful discussion by asking other students for explanations or clarifications of ideas. They work well in a small group and volunteer for leadership roles. They ask questions of the adviser, coach, or facilitator when they are unsure of the next steps in an activity, task, or project. They do not inhibit others' contributions.</p>	<p>All students are involved in activities which extend beyond the traditional school day and contribute to their personal development.</p> <p>Students weigh multiple perspectives on a prospective activity, task, or project and consider the good of the larger population. They use relevant knowledge to analyze an issue. In planning, they employ higher-order discussion strategies, such as argument by analogy, stipulation, or resolution of a value conflict. Students engage in sustained interchange as they accomplish their activities. They summarize and assess the progress of the activity, project, or task. They monitor and adjust the processes they are using. They keep complete and accurate records. Students make no comments nor do they act in ways that inhibit the contributions of others. If someone does, they intervene in appropriate ways.</p>

Table II Characteristics of Schoolwide Activities Programs: Minimal–Strong

Minimal Program Level 1	Limited Program Level 2	Adequate Program Level 3	Strong Program Level 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimal number of activities that bond some students to the school are available at the school site. These activities provide few opportunities for leadership, group membership, expansion of academic knowledge, personal connections with adult role models, exposure to a variety of cultures, and connections to the larger community and are not connected to student learning goals. • There is little, if any, focus on meeting the needs of the whole student through the activities. There is little understanding of the interrelationships of health/physical, personal/social, cognitive/creative, vocational competencies. This understanding may be evident in only a few student activities. • Parents/families participate in few, if any, student activities and there are few or no opportunities to connect to the school. • There is little or no evidence of a connection between students and the community. Activities that serve youths and link only a few students to the larger community are in place. Few students have opportunities through student activities for involvement in community issues or issues affecting people in the community and/or opportunities for social responsibility through community service. • The school has few, if any, partnerships with business and community agencies. Relationships seem to be designed to provide monetary or material support. • There is little evidence that the school-community connections occurring through student activities have influenced the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited number of activities that bond some students to the school are available at the school site. These activities provide some opportunities for leadership, group membership, expansion of academic knowledge, personal connections with adult role models, exposure to a variety of cultures, and connections to the larger community. They somewhat support student learning goals. • There is a limited focus on meeting the needs of the whole student through the activities. The understanding of the interrelationships of health/physical, personal/social, cognitive/creative, vocational competencies is limited and may be evident in only some student activities. • Parents and families participate in some student activities, and there may be limited opportunities to connect to the school. • There is limited evidence of a connection between students and the community. Activities that serve youths and link some students to the larger community are in place. Some students have opportunities through student activities for involvement in community issues or issues affecting people in the community and/or opportunities for social responsibility through community service. • The school has limited partnerships with business and community agencies. Relationships seem to be designed to provide monetary or material support to the school, not educational and social opportunities. • There is limited evidence that the school-community connections occurring through student activities have influenced the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of activities that bond most students to the school are available at the school site. These activities provide many opportunities for leadership, group membership, expansion of academic knowledge, personal connections with adult role models, exposure to a variety of cultures, and connections to the larger community. • There is an adequate focus on meeting the needs of the whole student through the activities. An understanding of the interrelationships of health/physical, personal/social, cognitive/creative, vocational competencies is evident in most student activities. • Parents/families are regarded as partners in most student activities and may be connected to the school through their support and participation. • There is adequate evidence of a positive connection between most students and the community. Activities that serve youths and link most students to the larger community are in place. Many students have frequent and various opportunities through student activities for involvement in community issues or issues affecting people in the community and/or opportunities for social responsibility through community service. • The school has partnerships with business and community agencies. Relationships may be designed to provide monetary or material support to the school and educational and social awareness of the opportunities available to students or issues relevant to students. • There is evidence that the school-community connections occurring through student activities have influenced the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide variety of activities that bond all students to the school are available at the school site. These activities support student learning and provide multiple opportunities for leadership, group membership, expansion of academic knowledge, personal connections with adult role models, exposure to a variety of cultures, and connections to the larger community. • There is a strong focus on meeting the needs of the whole student through all activities. An understanding of the interrelationships of health/physical, personal/social, cognitive/creative, vocational competencies is clearly evident in all student activities. • Parents and families are regarded as partners in all student activities and are connected to the school through their support and participation. • There is concrete evidence of a strong, positive connection between all students and the community. Activities that serve youths and link all students to the larger community are in place. All students have frequent and various opportunities through student activities for involvement in community issues or issues affecting people in the community and/or opportunities for social responsibility through community service. • The school has well-established partnerships with business and community agencies. Relationships are designed to provide monetary or material support to the school and educational and social awareness of the many opportunities available to students or issues relevant to students. • There is concrete evidence that the school-community connections occurring through student activities have positively influenced the students.

Research Related to Student Activities

Student activities are defined as all of the events in which students participate, whether or not they are held at school or are related to the curriculum. The student activities program is, however, connected to the school in some way and is acknowledged by the school as important to the total learning environment. There has been much discussion of the distinctions between curricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular activities. We believe that all such experiences enrich an individual's life and contribute to participatory citizenship. Among the sponsors of cocurricular and extracurricular activities are the school's athletic program, other athletic programs (community parks and recreation programs, for example), youth clubs and organizations, on-campus interest groups, library programs, class and school organizations, and other agencies that contribute to youth development. Other important activities include special school functions, such as theme days; special assemblies; awards assemblies; Career Days; before-school, noontime, and after-school activities; music, drama, art, and career-vocational student organizations that extend beyond the traditional school day; and field trips.

Student Activities and Individual Development

A comprehensive student activities program is sometimes seen as supplemental to the core purpose of schooling. However, when the activities program is intentionally coordinated with the school curriculum, the resulting advantage to learning is clear. For example, student activities are a prime example of authentic performance-based assessment of learning because they demonstrate what students know and are able to do. The bridge between curricular learning and life experiences can be and frequently is made in this way. In addition, opportunities which provide practice in leadership, organization, and teamwork contribute to students' understanding of what lies ahead in life and prepares them for work upon completion of their education. In student activities, there are chances for:

- Participatory citizenship
- Experiences which lead to good sportsmanship
- Team roles that include leadership
- Teaching and modeling for others
- Accountability, record keeping, and time management

- Use of communications skills
- Understanding social systems
- The selection and use of appropriate technology

Research in child development “emphasizes that children grow and learn through their interactions with other children, adults, and materials in the environment . . . [and that they] shape their concepts and attitudes as they continue to observe, question, form opinions, and test and reevaluate their conclusions. They construct their own ideas through problem solving and make decisions based on real-life experiences” (*Kids’ Time*, 1994, 10). Therefore, it is important to involve all students in activities at an early age. When they are active in the early years through play groups and later through such organizations as scouting, clubs, and other before- and after-school programs, students are more likely to continue to be involved as they reach early adolescence and continue through their high school and postsecondary education years into adulthood, becoming participating citizens and lifelong learners and enjoying recreational activities throughout their lives.

Student activities programs should be based on the characteristics children exhibit at different ages and stages of play. For example, children ages five through seven years will use toy replicas of objects for dramatic play, and they frequently create imaginary playmates and engage in solitary imaginary play; they begin to understand someone else’s point of view, and they become socially involved in playing games, often with little regard for rules. Older children, ages eight to ten years, can use symbolic props for dramatic play; they engage in cooperative play, are able to understand others’ points of view, and, because they understand and can follow rules, can play team sports. Students at about ages eleven through thirteen years are creative in developing dramatic roles, in writing, and in performing sophisticated productions, and they are highly involved in cooperative play. They enjoy exploring the ideas and points of view of people from other times and places. Highly organized games are possible, although students in this age group frequently challenge the rules (*Kids’ Time*, 1994, 13).

Developmental levels for all students vary, but, in general, the developmental stages of school-age children five to thirteen years old are described in Table III (adapted from *Kids’ Time*, 1994, 118–135).

Student activities can be structured to address the multiple intelligences as they have been identified by Howard Gardner.

Table III Developmental Stages of Children, Ages Five to Thirteen Years

Category	Younger (5–7)	Older (8–10)	Oldest (11–13)
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display egocentric thinking • Demonstrate the beginnings of logical thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think logically with the help of concrete objects • Display natural curiosity • Are experiencing a crucial time in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think more like adults • Are interested in the adult world • Lack long-range planning
Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance—Are developing an awareness of their bodies • Music—Like to sing songs with simple melodies, experiment with simple percussion instruments • Art—Like to experiment with a variety of art media • Theater—Like to engage in simple sociodramatic play in which they take on familiar roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance—Are interested in learning a variety of dances, are often self-conscious, tend to pair up with the same sex in dances • Music—Like to sing songs in two or more parts, can play simple melodies on different instruments, can create compositions and interpret standard notation • Art—Experiment with a variety of media and processes, have increased skills to do shading and brush drawing, are able to make realistic and more abstract objects • Theater—Like to develop story dramatizations and write plays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance—Many are highly skilled; can improvise. It is important for them to learn the latest dances • Music—Enjoy all kinds of music; have favorite styles, singers, etc.; play instruments well; create compositions • Art—Draw and paint at a high level, also able craftspeople; like creating optical illusions; can identify and discuss works of art • Theater—Can be sophisticated performers; create pantomime and comic scenes; write, produce, and direct their own plays
Social-Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show strong ties between physical and emotional states of being • Have energy highs and lows • Begin to play cooperatively • Have a strong attachment to adults • Have an emerging sense of humor • Have limited control of expression • Are developing their self-identity • Want to be part of older children's activities • Need assistance with transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin comparing themselves to others • Have high energy • Are able to learn from each other • Develop relatively stable groups of friends • Have extreme reactions to many things • Are making critical choices about gangs and drugs • Exhibit growing independence • Are able to work in groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience mood and energy swings • Require limits • Have a need for privacy • Engage in power struggles • Need to develop self-esteem • Experience relationship traumas
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have gross motor skills • Are developing fine motor skills • Like to practice motor skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin exhibiting physical differences • Develop physically at a smooth and uneventful rate • Can make social problems out of physical difficulties • Compare their physical skills with those of their peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show great hormonal changes and physical growth • Begin a period of rapid growth • Often experience a period of great adjustment
Ethical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe rules are sacred but do not always play by them • Think it is unfair to do what is forbidden • Believe in obeying authority figures so they do not get punished 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play by the rules • Believe in social, conventional rules • Believe in fair treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to make ethical decisions by themselves • Think social injustice is unfair • Are willing to revise outdated rules

Students need experiences that will build on their own strongest intelligences and will also help them to develop intelligences that are less strong. Gardner suggested that intelligence has more to do with solving problems and creating products in a rich, natural environment than with doing isolated tasks on an examination (1983). A rich student activities program enhances the strengths of students through projects which address the multiple intelligences (Armstrong, 1994).

Table IV School Programs and Activities That Develop Multiple Intelligences		
Intelligence	Program	Student Activities
Linguistic	Creative writing Communications Word games Discussions	Debate School newspaper Yearbook Language clubs
Logical/Mathematical	Computer programming Number games Puzzles, mazes Experiments	Honor society Science clubs Chess club Honor society Water play, different-sized containers
Spatial	Visual-thinking laboratory Architecture Drawing Sculpture Manipulative toys	Photography club Audiovisual staff Chess club
Bodily-Kinesthetic	Theater games Martial arts New games Games requiring coordination	Block construction Sports teams Drama Cheerleading
Musical	Music programs Playing instruments Singing Listening to music	Dance Band Orchestra Chorus
Interpersonal	Social skills Health-focused organizations Teamwork Cooperative games	Dance Student government Class meetings Cross-age tutoring
Intrapersonal	Self-esteem programs Autobiographies	AIDS/drugs/race-awareness programs Special-interest clubs "How I feel" activities

How Children Spend Their Time

There are several studies on the way students spend their time away from school. In his 1984 study of youths in crisis, Jürgen Habermas lamented that families are becoming privatized. He cited the use of television (and more recently, home computers) as inhibitors of the socialization that is necessary for active citizenship (Habermas, 1984).

According to a 1985 survey by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Maynard, 1985), middle school students between the ages of eleven and sixteen years chose athletic games as their favorite social activity in school and selected parties and field days as their second choice.

Beyond the weekday time that children between the ages of three and seventeen years spend sleeping and attending school, the major activities of younger children (three to eleven years) are watching television or playing, which consumed four hours per day. All older students (twelve to seventeen years) spent time watching television; to early adolescents, personal care and socializing with friends were important, and to older adolescents, paid work was important. (*Conditions of Children in California*, 1989).

The 1992 Report of the Carnegie Corporation, *A Matter of Time*, reinforced these data on youths' use of time. Students aged nine to fourteen years enjoy 37 hours of discretionary time per week. Of this time, 18 hours are spent watching television; 13½ hours are spent in play, sports, and outdoor activities; and five hours are spent on reading, religious activities, or visiting with friends.

For the year ending in May, 1989, 13 percent of the national youth population ages sixteen to nineteen years engaged in volunteer work. In 1991, 33.8 percent of the white males and 10.2 percent of the black males ages sixteen to seventeen years were employed full- or part-time while enrolled in school; 37.9 percent of the white females and 10.3 percent of the black females ages sixteen to seventeen years were also employed full- or part-time while enrolled in school (*Youth Indicators*, 1993).

Older students' decisions to join the workforce need not prohibit opportunities for participatory citizenship and the enjoyment of lifelong recreational opportunities. A comprehensive program of activities which includes service learning provides students with learning experiences in which they develop a sense of responsibility about their communities and encourages participation in community projects.

Student Activities Related to School Organization and Culture

In a speech and paper entitled “Pushing the Boundaries of Education: The Implications of a Youth Development Approach to Education Policies, Structures, and Collaborations,” prepared for the 1992 Summer Institute of the Council of Chief State School Officers, Karen J. Pittman of the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Washington, D.C., and Michelle Cahill, Executive Director of the Youth Development Institute, New York City, recommend a systems approach to making fundamental changes in the agencies and institutions that serve young people. They argue that limited add-on programs that have focused narrowly on “fixing” youngsters by reducing their problem behaviors have failed to result in significant improvement in the lives of students but, instead, have contributed to fragmentation. As advocates for fully prepared adolescents, they recommend collaboration among schools and other institutions which result in an “emphasis on youth development as the most effective strategy for the prevention of youth problems and the achievement of educational goals.” They define five competency areas needed by students for success as adults:

- Health/physical competence: Good current health and evidence of appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that will ensure future health (e.g., exercise, good diet/nutrition, effective contraceptive practices); good mental and emotional health
- Personal/social competence: Intrapersonal skills (ability to understand personal emotions, exercise self-discipline); interpersonal skills (ability to work with others and to develop friendships and relationships through communication, cooperation, empathizing, negotiation); coping/system skills (ability to adapt, be flexible, assume responsibility); judgment skills (ability to plan, evaluate, make decisions, solve problems)
- Cognitive/creative competence: Broad base of knowledge, ability to appreciate and participate in areas of creative expression; good oral, written language skills; problem-solving and analytical skills; ability to learn and an interest in learning and achieving
- Vocational competence: Broad understanding and awareness of vocational (and avocational) options and of steps needed to

act on choices; adequate preparation for chosen career;
understanding of value and function of work (and leisure)

- **Citizenship (ethics and participation):** Understanding of the history and values of one's nation and community and the desire to be involved in efforts that contribute to the nation and community

Other documents make recommendations which corroborate the work of Pittman and Cahill. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) report is a case in point. This report lists the foundation elements and the competencies expected of a student as he or she enters the workforce.

These SCANS foundations are:

- *Basic skills:* Reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, speaking and listening
- *Thinking skills:* Thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn, and reasoning
- *Personal qualities:* Individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity

The five SCANS competencies are:

- *Resources:* Allocating time, money, materials, space, and staff
- *Interpersonal skills:* Working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- *Information:* Acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, and using computers to process information
- *Systems:* Understanding social, organizational, and technological systems; monitoring and correcting performance; and designing or improving systems
- *Technology:* Selecting equipment and tools, applying technology to specific tasks, and maintaining and troubleshooting technologies

With a specific focus on at-risk youths, *Reclaiming Youth at Risk* identifies the features of powerful reclaiming environments, those which have the capacity to reengage students and help them feel connected to the school. The authors pinpoint the following features of these environments: Students feel a sense of belonging to a supportive community rather than being lost in a depersonalized bureaucracy; the environments meet students' needs for

mastery rather than imposing inflexible systems designed for the convenience of adults; these environments involve youth in determining their own futures while, at the same time, recognizing society's need to control harmful behavior; the environments expect youth to be caregivers, not just helpless recipients who are overly dependent on the care of adults (Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Von Bockern, 1990). Therefore, a student activities program which emphasizes belonging, mastery, youth involvement, and responsible independence will encourage students who may not otherwise feel included to become involved. Creating art projects which could be given to others, writing and publishing a book for younger children, or organizing and participating in a community cleanup day are examples of activities that encourage such involvement.

Student Activities and School Restructuring

How does a comprehensive student activities program which includes service-learning fit into the restructuring efforts occurring in schools in California and across the nation? The response to this question involves not only educators and parents who wish to improve learning for their students but also the larger business and professional communities, government agencies, youth organizations, and others. As educators work toward school improvement, whether it involves fundamental changes in assumptions, practices, and relationships or it is a less extensive form of incremental improvement, it becomes clear that educators cannot act in isolation. Grace and Larry Guthrie summarized this call for an integration of services in a September, 1991, *Educational Leadership* article:

Now is the time to look at the full range of functions that schools are being asked to perform and identify which of those the school is best suited to handle, which can best be provided by other institutions and agencies, and which can best be accomplished by joint effort. The challenge is not simply to divide up responsibilities, but to reconceptualize the role of the school and relationships among the school, the community, and the larger society. The new arrangement must be designed so that it shifts the emphasis of each agency away from itself and toward the client: the child. (Guthrie and Guthrie, 1991)

The relationship of student activities to the California grade-span initiatives (*Here They Come, Ready or Not; It's Elementary!; Caught in the Middle; Second to None*) is meaningful in defining the frame of reference for youth development and in placing new

information in context. The importance of social interaction is recognized in all four task force reports as is the significance of students as decision makers who define their own direction and participate in democratic processes. Moreover, *Caught in the Middle* specifically addresses student activities in Recommendation 13, Extracurricular and Intramural Activities: “Every middle grade student should have access to extracurricular and intramural programs which develop a sense of personal connectedness to school through activities which promote participation, interaction, competition, and service” (*Caught in the Middle*, 1987, 85).

Programs which are comprehensive serve all students and are designed to include all populations as they create a campus community. Students who are limited in their use of English, students who are from economically disadvantaged families, and students who have disabilities must be considered carefully in the planning process and included as full participants in any student activities program. An important way to ensure that all students participate in student activities is to make certain that students representing all populations are fully involved in the planning, design, and implementation of the activities. Staff education, training, and reflection is particularly important, not only for working with special populations but also for encouraging students to take responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating specific activities and entire programs. It takes more staff time when students develop plans and coordinate activities that are an important part of the school community and the learning process.

Student Activities That Promote Positive School Culture

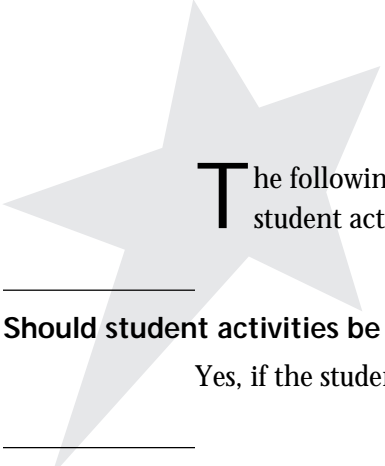
How do educators create schools in which all students feel recognized and empowered to bring to the process their voices, their perspectives, and their identities? One of the most important issues educators can examine today is the subtle and not-so-subtle ways that school structures and methods of teaching perpetuate the problems of racism and classism in this society (Poplin and Rivera, 1995). There is no intent among educators to discriminate. Nevertheless, when well-intentioned adults interact with minority students they represent the unquestioned assumptions, values, and priorities of a dominant middle-class culture. For real change to occur, these assumptions must be questioned. Planning must involve students from the beginning if they are going to feel ownership. They need to feel a sense of efficacy and control over

what they are committed to doing. In other words, real change must challenge the power structure that disables both ethnic and racial minorities (Cummins, 1989).

The route to student motivation and leadership through the school's culture begins in the elementary school. Student activities foster a school environment that motivates students, teachers, staff, and other adults. Terrence Deal (1987) says that school culture can be shaped through shared values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, stories, and cultural networks. All of these avenues can be pursued under the umbrella of student activities. When one thinks of heroes, the leaders of the student body come to mind: class officers, athletes, academic competition winners. However, a comprehensive student activities program should work to make every student feel like a hero, not just those who have won traditional recognition or status.

Rituals and ceremonies are essential components of student activities. Installations of students into offices or youth organizations, awards ceremonies, cultural recognition events, homecoming, theme days, graduation, and other events keep school culture alive and communicate the shared community values. Davis (1989) says, "Visible symbols illustrate and confirm what is considered to be important in the school." Schools need to make special efforts to find opportunities to recognize students who may excel in less traditional ways. The messages of what is really valued are communicated through school newsletters, mission and vision statements, academic and behavioral expectations, rituals, symbols, and legends. Publicizing student success through academic, career-vocational, or athletic recognition assemblies; local media; and honor rolls can help students recognize the importance of their own achievement and enhance their self-esteem.

Questions and Answers



The following are some frequently asked questions about student activities programs, along with responses.

Should student activities be included in student learning plans?

Yes, if the student, parent, and school decide to include them.

What are the most successful strategies for including all students in at least one activity of interest, especially those students who are not well connected to school?

Student activities should be grounded in the needs and interests of students as defined by students and their families.

Is it possible to change a school's structure and funding to be more responsive to student activities?

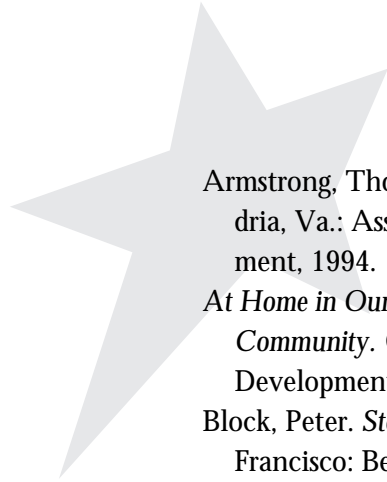
Laws and regulations which restrict student activities need to be reviewed; for example those in the areas of food sales, transportation contracts, negotiated personnel contracts. Funding priority for student activities should be a part of each school's vision.

Agencies working with children and youths should establish advisory boards that consist of key stakeholders. This group should work together during the design, planning, implementation, and evaluation process.

How can we promote parental and family involvement in planning and implementing a comprehensive student activities program?

Provide opportunities for all students to participate in student activities, but do not require them to do so. Encourage parents to participate in student activities in a variety of ways.

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